A Tribute to James C. Hickman
(20 April 1941–15 June 1993)

A long standing member of the California Botanical Society and former editor of Madrono passed away this year. While a formal obituary is planned for a future issue, we here present a personal tribute.

Jim Hickman, editor of the new Jepson Manual, died recently of Aids-related pneumonia. The new field guide is the result of Jim's planning and organization. With a dedicated group of authors, artists, editors, and volunteers, over 200 people in all, and the support of the Friends of the Jepson Herbarium, the manual was completed on time and with distinction. We are grateful that Jim lived long enough to see the result of his efforts.

During the late 70's and early 80's, Jim and Larry Heckard, of the Jepson Herbarium, were collaborating on the flora of Snow Mountain, a peak of the Inner North Coast Ranges. The need to revise and update existing state field guides became very evident as they worked on the project—the rest is history—as they say.

The publication of *The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California* is a direct result of that collaboration. When he started in 1982, Jim was to do a revision of the original 1925 Jepson *Manual of Flowering Plants,* working on a 10-year schedule. As the project progressed, the scope and form evolved to reflect the complexities and changes of the last 50 years of botanical research. The new manual is not only up-to-date, but "is based on a virtually revolutionary premise: a single work of this magnitude can be simultaneously accessible to dedicated beginners and indispensable to professional botanists."

Though it seems like a much longer time, I first met Jim in 1979. As with so many of his fans, our meeting was in a classroom—he on the "up" side of the podium. As a returning student, the spring course on the California flora and plant communities was one of the first classes I wanted to take, and, as it turned out, it was the first he had taught at Berkeley. It was a wonderful introduction to botany at Cal. Jim was not only enthusiastic and knowledgeable about botany and ecology in general, and the California flora especially, but a truly inspired and inspiring teacher.

Since that time, many of his students and colleagues have confirmed my impression. Jim will be remembered particularly as a teacher. He was anxious to communicate his love of the plant world, and nature in general, to youthful students, and to the mature laity, where amateur and professional merge in a powerful force for heightened appreciation and dedicated conservation.

Besides teaching at Washington State University, Pullman, Swarthmore College, and University of California, Berkeley, Jim was Associate Program Director for Systematic Biology (1975–1976) with the National Science Foundation. He became a Shanti volunteer in 1983 and was active with other Aids-related groups.

Jim taught at Swarthmore for eight years after teaching at Pullman and before coming to Berkeley. Many of his former students continued to seek him out as they went into the world. Whether they were looking for a job, applying to graduate school, or needed direction in their studies or their lives, they came—asking advice, seeking support, looking to a friend. And a friend he was!

I started working with Jim and Larry in 1983—first as a volunteer and then as a staff member. Jim was the ideal boss and we became good friends. He was as enthusiastic and generous about sharing his many outside interests as he was in sharing his love of natural history. I am very grateful for all that I learned from him and honored to have been a part of his life.

Jim's life was a celebration. Music, intellectual curiosity, and friends were his touchstones. His passing reflected his life—one of awareness, courage, and surrounded

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by friends. James C. Hickman's name on *The Jepson Manual* is a fitting memorial to his vision and perseverance.

—Susan D'Alcamo

I knew Jim Hickman throughout his tragically brief career, first while he was a graduate student at the University of Oregon, then as a Professor at Swarthmore, and finally during his period at the University of California at Berkeley. He had a very important influence on my own career. A number of the absolutely first rate undergraduate students that he attracted to biology at Swarthmore subsequently pursued graduate studies at Stanford, much to our benefit. Subsequently these students have attained leading roles in teaching and research in population biology. During the period between Swarthmore and in assuming his duties with the Jepson Herbarium Jim collaborated with Nona Chiariello and myself on an ecological study of the annual grasslands on Jasper Ridge at Stanford. I felt that this was an important study but it had the unfortunate result of convincing Jim that plant systematics would be more rewarding than counting seedlings of very small plants of different species that had convergent morphologies at an early stage. Ecology's loss was certainly plant systematic's gain as his magnificent new flora has subsequently shown. Now both ecology and plant systematics have lost his unusual talents and I have lost a good friend.

—H. A. Mooney

During his years of teaching at Swarthmore College (1970–1978), Jim Hickman had a profound influence on the generation of students who studied plant taxonomy and plant ecology with him. He was universally respected as a rigorous and intellectually challenging teacher, and loved for his ability to nurture potential and bring out the best in everyone. Influenced by Jim's teaching, dozens of the undergraduates from his classes at Swarthmore continued in areas related to ecology or taxonomy.

As a teacher, Jim set extremely high standards but had the gift of making them reachable. Often even the best students became terribly lost early in Jim's systematics class when they were handed a mammoth, mimeographed syllabus of plant families and took their first plunge into the Magnoliidae. Jim had included in the syllabus a wealth of details about numerous genera, and even species, in each family of flowering plants. After one exam that devastated much of the class, one student complained of the difficulty of knowing what was important for the exam. Jim replied that everything was important, but then added with characteristic humor and compassion, that the key was in finding out what was sufficient. Eventually we understood that Jim had provided multiple routes to learning plant families. On Sunday afternoons, plant specimens from the week's taxonomy lab drew students in to the lab to review, compare notes, commiserate, and become friends. Many of us retained more from that class than any other in college. His syllabus has since been duplicated many times and passed on to many more students than Jim personally taught. It served as an important foundation for those of us who went on to teach similar courses.

Jim's plant ecology class and honors seminar were equally challenging and inspiring. He forced us to think critically and independently. Years before the publication of John Harper's Population Biology of Plants, Jim introduced ideas and perspectives from the emerging field of plant population biology into his teaching. The course was also an intense introduction to the trials and joys of field ecology. The plant ecology field trip to the Pine Barrens was legendary. After a manic weekend braving poison ivy, Smilax, weather, and our own camp cooking to run transects in a variety of habitats, we emerged with an appreciation for the mechanisms structuring Pine Barrens communities. That trip was also an introduction to the rewards and stresses of collaborative data collection and analysis. The cooperative approach to science that Jim successfully encouraged helped to shape lifetime attitudes for many of us.

Important as his academic orientation was, Jim's greater gift to his students was in recognizing something special, and different, in each of them. Those of us who were most overwhelmed by academic or other college pressures were most aware of this. He supported us when we were struggling and credited us when we mastered concepts, as though both were integral parts of learning. He recognized our abilities whenever he could. We remember one crucial seminar when Jim declared that a student's experimental design was superior to his own, and he asked her to explain it to the class.

Jim's outlook influenced and spread through his classes, and it fostered friendships that are among our most important. Later, Jim gracefully, and gladly, stepped out of the role of mentor and became a colleague, collaborator, and friend, an adjustment that seemed minor because of the respect he showed his students.

As our teacher, Jim passed on to us the finest example of scientific scholarship coupled with a patient and caring focus on the student as a person. He is the teacher and scholar we use as a yardstick in our lives and our careers.

—Nona Chiariello
—Johanna Schmitt
—Elizabeth L. Taylor
—Virginia Boucher

ANNOUNCEMENT

Symposium

Natural Resources in the Puente Hills-Chino Hills Corridor
Whittier College, 18–19 March 1994
Abstracts due 1 February 1994 to:

Dr. Cheryl Swift
Department of Biology
Whittier College
Whittier, CA 90602